

SN. 09/725,607

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. CANO:015

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 will remain pending in this application after entry of this Amendment for which applicant seeks reconsideration.

Amendment

Claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 13, 15, 17, 19, 23, and 25 have been amended to more clearly recite the invention and to remove minor informalities contained therein, including the one identified by the examiner. Throughout the claims, the term "job" has been changed to --request-- for added clarity, without narrowing the scope thereof. New claims 27-30 have been added to further define the present invention. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Takimoto (USP 6,202,092). Applicant traverses this rejection at least to the extent that Takimoto would not have taught the claimed clearing means/step and notification means/step as recited in the independent claims.

According to the present invention, an image forming device control system (and counterpart method) where history information storage means of the image forming device, such as a multifunction printer 100, stores history information relating to the image processing executed a plurality of time by the image forming device. The information processing apparatus, such as a host computer 11, transmits a history information acquisition request to the image forming device, and the history information acquisition means thereof acquires the history information stored by the history information storage means in the image forming device according to the history information acquisition request. By storing history information obtained by image processing executed a plurality of times in the image forming device (instead of the network side such as the image processing apparatus (host computer)), and transferring the history information to the image processing apparatus in response to a request (history information acquisition request) therefrom, the burden on the network such as the

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memory capacity of the image processing apparatus can be reduced while making it possible to manage the detailed counter table for every user and every operating mode on the image forming device side.

First, as previously argued, Takimoto does not disclose or suggest anywhere sending or transmitting history information from the printer 3 to the server 2 or even seeking history information from the printer 3 by the server, let alone sending history information obtained by image processing executed a plurality of number of times from the printer 3 to the server 2. Moreover, Takimoto fails to teach or suggest storing the history information in the printer 3.

Second, independent claims 1, 7, 13, 17, and 23 call for clearing means for or clearing step of clearing the history information relating to the image processing executed a plurality of times by the image forming device stored by the history information storage means when the history information is transferred to the information processing apparatus. See Fig. 9 and page 32 for support. This can reduce the required memory capacity of the image forming device, which is generally historically limited.

According to these claims, the history information, which is accumulated, is transferred from the image forming device to the information processing apparatus not until the history request information acquisition request is received. The history information in the image forming device is cleared or erased after the transfer. In this regard, the examiner states that Takimoto teaches resetting means for resetting the authority of each user's account and that it would have been obvious to reset the history information stored in the statistical managing portion of the printer when user account's on the server are reset in order to prevent the chances of incorrect history information being sent to the server. Applicant disagrees with the examiner's assessment to the extent that it lacks nexus to the claimed invention.

Takimoto discloses a print system for managing the security of a printer shared on a network, and more particularly, for checking whether users have the authority to print or access the security data (col. 1, lines 7-10). Takimoto provides a print system with an access management program to allow a manager to monitor use of a shared printer (col. 2, lines 9-14). In Takimoto, if the request is a print request, a print request analyzing portion 22a of a

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server 2 judges from the print data the number of pages in the print job, the type of paper or paper feeder for the print job, and which, if any, special printing function is requested (step S7 in Fig. 2). A security validating portion 22b determines whether the requests are within the limits on the number of pages (step S8 in Fig. 2) and whether any requested special printing functions are allowed (step S9 in Fig. 2) based on the stored authority and statistical information of the user in the security data base, and decides authorization or non-authorization to print (col. 5, lines 3-13).

When the printer 3 prints the pages, a statistical information managing portion 22d of the server 2 tallies the number of printed pages to the current total for the type of paper used and the current total for the number of times special printing functions have been used, as appropriate. The updated security data base is stored on a file device 23 of the server 2 (col. 4, lines 7-12; Fig. 1).

The resetting of the authority of each user's account has nothing to do with history information relating to the image processing executed a plurality of time by the image forming device:

Further, since authority of a user can be adjusted, flexible handling is possible, for example, to increase the maximum number of printable pages with respect to a user who must print a great amount, so such a user will not run short. [Column 7, lines 29-32].

The so called resetting has to do with the "authority" of the user, not history information relating to the image processing executed by the image forming device. Accordingly, Takimoto's resetting means has to do setting the limits of each user.

Applicant submits that it would not have been obvious for Takimoto to function as alleged by the examiner. Moreover, even Takimoto were to function as alleged by the examiner, Takimoto still would not have taught or provided motivation for clearing the history information when the history information is transferred to the information processing apparatus.

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Note that the examiner bears the initial burden of proving prima facie case of obviousness. Since Takimoto does not teach the claimed clearing means/step and the examiner has not provided any viable reasons for Takimoto to have included such means/step, as set forth in the independent claims, applicant submits that the examiner has failed to establish prima facie case of obviousness.

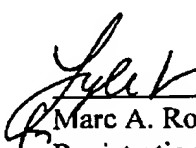
New claims 27-30 distinguish over Takimoto at least because Takimoto would not have taught the claimed notification means.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that claims 1-30 patentably distinguish over the applied references and thus urges the examiner to issue an early Notice of Allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicant urges the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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